HARAMBEE FLAME

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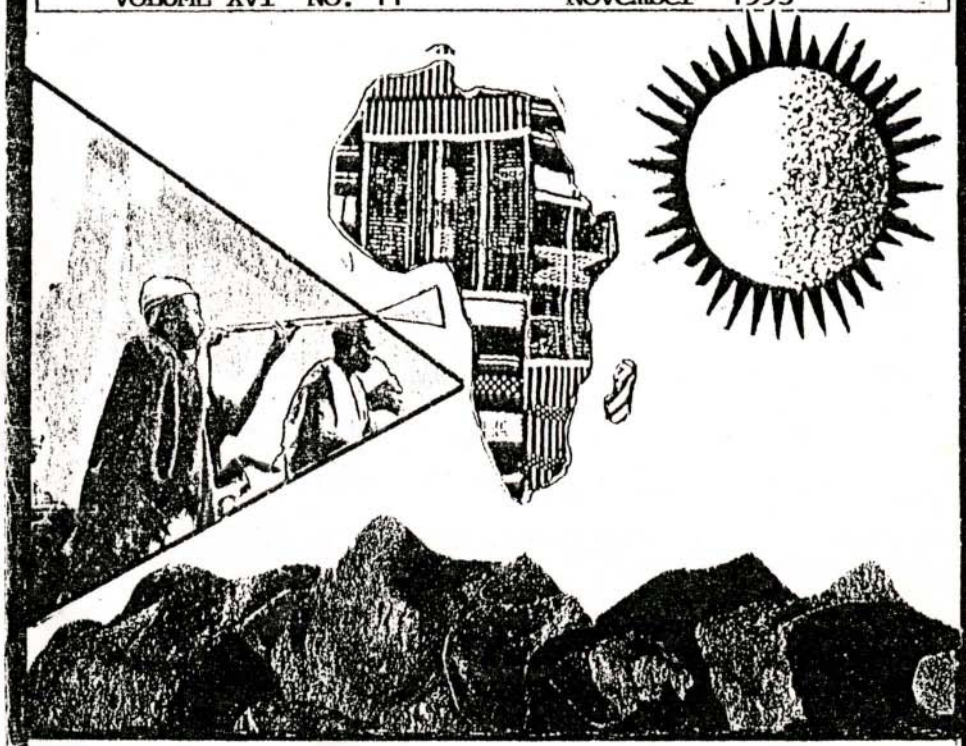

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HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

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HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION CREED

Together we seek to know that which is us, to expand our collective consciousness of who we are and whence we come. We exalt in the fact that Afrikans are beautiful in our own right, rather than at the expense of any other ethnic group. And in the true spirit of the Swahili word, "harambee," we promote the idea that cultural awareness is germane to human growth.

Commentary

We have, in previous editions of the FLAME, addressed the issue of why we do not refer to African people as "black" or "blacks." Essentially, our reasoning in this regard has to do with the fact that "black" is nothing more than an adjective, inaccurately describing our skin color and tells us nothing about our origins. "Black," used as a noun, reduces us to a skin people, as if there were nothing more significant about us.

We have also addressed the question of why we don't refer to ourselves as "African Americans." By way of review, while "African American" **denotes** that we are a people of African ancestry who are of American birth and/or citizenship, "African American" also has a **connotation,** pointing to us as people who **identify with** both the geographical U.S., or America, and the **political** entity which this country is. As a political entity, the U.S. is more than just a place. It is the ideology, policies, and practices of the U.S. government, its agencies and subdivisions, and the past and present history of the same.

The U.S., as political entity, is comprised of, among other things, the history of Europeans' near annihilation of this land's indigenous people and the theft of their territories, the history of Europeans' enslavement of our foreparents and the continuing injustice which theese Europeans impose upon us, and the past and present history of U.S. intervention in the internal affairs of sovereign nations with African populations or those of other people of color. By identifying with the United States of Occupied America(the home of the mis-named "Indians," which continues to be occupied by foreign usurpers), we are identifying with our own oppression and that of other people of color.

Among Africans in this country who have decided they do not identify with America(U.S.A.), the term "New Afrikans" has become popular. These Sisters and Brothers, while realizing the importance of our recognition of our African ancestry, suggest that our experience of slavery and its aftermath in the U.S. and elsewhere throughout the Americas,

the loss of our African languages and many of the customs and traditions that were practiced by our ancestors, etc. make of us a new people--"New Afrikans."

But there is a problem with this idea of our being "New Afrikans." It creates an artificial distinction between ourselves and Africans in Africa and elsewhere. And if we are "New" Africans, what are other Africans--"Old"? And what is it about our experience of European-imposed slavery here that makes us more "new" than Africans in Africa who experienced European-imposed colonialism? We do not need and could be harmed by creating and/or perpeturating artificial distinctions among the world-wide population of African people. If we support the idea of pan-Africanism, then we must do those things which will serve to promote the fulfillment of the promise of pan-Africanism.

After all is said, we are simply "Africans." Of course, there are times when we are writing or speaking where it is useful or necessary for us to point out that a certain African or group of Africans is from a particular place. In such cases, we can, for example, drefer to Africans from the U.S. as "U.S.-born Africans." This term lets it be known that we're speaking of African people born here but does not either stress "U.S." or connote an identification on our part with the U.S.

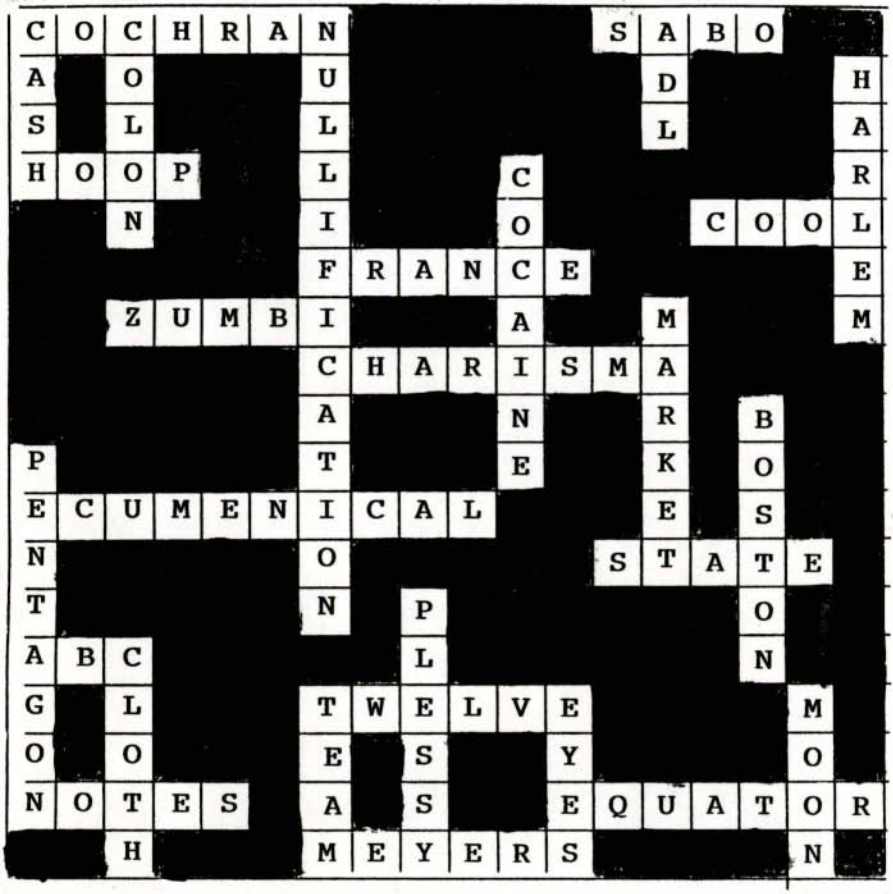
We should understand that there is often a correlation between how we identify ourselves and our attitudes about and aspirations concerning our relationship to the **land** which comprises the U.S. Most of us seem to be of the position that this land is ours due to the contributions we have mad to what it has become and to the sacrifices we have made in the process. In short, we are of the belief that we have earned a piece of "America." Within the confines of this belief, we differ as to how we are to have what we have earned, with some of us being of the opinion that we ought to have our pieces of America, in integrated fashion, along with the "other Americans." Some of us are of the opinion that we ought to improve and establish new separate communities from those of

Europeans/Caucasians. And there are others among us who believe that we should have our own separate nation with the current boundaries of this country.

There's no doubt that we have earned **something** and that Europeans here owe us. But while we can go after various forms of reparations, we cannot, as a people motivated by justice, demand what so-called "Uncle" Sam is in no position to give--namely, even a square inch of this land. It is not his to give. For us to even consider negotiating with the U.S. government about any of this land is for us to ignore the fact that both the European occupiers here and ourselves are in someone else's home. This is the home of the Sioux, Dine, Arapaho, Apache, and other indigenous people. Our home is the continent of Africa. If we are to be negotiating with anyone about making a portion of this land our home, that anyone(s) should be its indigenous people, the final authorities on this question. Or have some among us taken on the arrogance of our and the indigenous people's oppressor?

-Editor

HARAMBEE FLAME Africentric Crossword Puzzle #8 -Solution



Editorial Policy

The HARAMBEE FLAME is the monthly newsletter of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization(Nebraska State Pen chapter). Ours is a pan-Africanist publication, meaning that we view all people of African descent as one African people, having certain basic interests in common. Also, the HARAMBEE FLAME attempts to be Africentric, in that, through study of the history, cultures, and traditional values of African people, we seek to have and cultivate an African way of looking at things.

The main purposes of the HARAMBEE FLAME are to stimulate and inform. We list "stimulate" first because, more than anything else, we want our readers to be moved to question their/your own ideas, lives, and the circumstances in which we live and to challenge those things that must be challenged in order for us to move from a condition of mental and spiritual servitude and physical dependence upon Caucasian institutions to a state of collective self-determination. Toward this purpose, we present commentaries, poems, etc. These do not necessarily represent the official positions of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization.

The HARAMBEE FLAME provides information because wise people want to know what's going on abd because certain kinds of information can stimulate the mind, inspire people to want to act, and influence them to pursue proper understanding so that the actions they take will be as effective as possible. The main vehicle we use to provide information is our "From Other Sources" feature in which we make an effort to provide news about the problems we African people are confronted by and the steps we are taking to resolve them. In this feature, we try to present coverage of the activities of African people and developments affecting us in the U.S., the nations of Africa, and elsewhere. "Community News" is another vehicle.

We encourage you to submit your reports, essays, poems, etc. Please enclose stamped, self-addressed return envelope.

From Other Sources

Double Jeopardy & Civil Forfeiture

"A trio of U.S. Supreme Court cases has opened a window of opportunity to use a double jeopardy defense when the government has pursued separate civil forfeiture proceedings and criminal prosecutions for the same offense. In the first case, Halper v. U.S., 490 U.S. 35 (1989), the court used a proportionality test to determine that a civil fine that was more than 220 times greater than the government's costs of investigation and prosecution was a punishment for double jeopardy purposes. Because the defendant had already been punished in a criminal prosecution for the same offense, the government could not impose the civil fine.

"This idea was expanded in Austin v. U.S., 509 U.S.___, 113 S.Ct. 2801 (1993). In the third case, Dept. of Revenue of Montana v. Kurth Ranch, 114S.Ct. 1937 (1994), the court decided that a state drug tax was a second punishment and could not be imposed because the defendant had already been sentenced in a criminal prosecution, but uses a different analysis than Halper to determine if drug tax assessments are punishments...

"Prisoners who file habeas petitions may...have to show cause and actual prejudice if they did not raise double jeopardy on direct appeal or in a previous habeas petition..."

-from "The Double Jeopardy Defense And Civil Rorfeiture," pages 1-3, Oct. COALITION FOR PRISONERS' RIGHTS NEWSLETTER(Published by the Prison Project of Santa Fe, Inc.; P.O. Box 1911; Santa Fe, N.M.; 87504-1911)

U.S. And France Putting Squeeze Play On Nigeria?

"The U.S. recently went into a defence pact with Benin Republic, Nigeria's western neighbor which is smaller than many of Nigeria's 30 states. Observers wonder why Washington, which could not sign a pact with Benin Republic during the Cold War, when it went into alliances with all

manner of countries, should do so in the post Cold War era. The essence of the defence pact is seen by some as a way to intimidate Nigeria. To add credence to this speculation, the Beninoise leaders have become hostile to Nigeria. This is quite curious because only three years ago the government in Cotonou could not pay salaries of public servants for a year, and the Nigerian government offset the debt after the Benin Republic pleaded with Nigeria.

"The defence pact between Paris and Yaounde which makes the two countries regard an attack on any one of them as an attack on the other has contributed in no small way to the exacerbation of tension between Nigeria and its eastern neighbor, Cameroun. Early last year when tension rose between the two countries over the oil-rich Bakassi peninsula, the French government, instead of searching for a peaceful resolution of the crisis, dispatched troops and terrible paraphernalia of war to Cameroun. The French fridget prowled the Camerounian waters itching for action. 'It amazes me', said an African diplomat 'that once there is a misunderstanding between one group of Africans and another, Western governments and corporate bodies which always claim to be unable to help African countries with technical, educational, financial or business assistance immediately send to them weapons to annihilate each other in one fell swoop.'"

-from "Nigeria And The West: Containment Policy At Work," pages 19-23, Nov./Dec. AFRICAN WORLD

Sisters In Sudan Move To The Front In Search Of Peace

"A group of war-weary Sudanese women says they plan to hold talks with Sudan's government and southern rebels with a view to ending the country's 12-year-old civil war...

"We have formed an action network within the General Women's Union to work for peace in the Sudan' she[Betty Achan of the state-run Sudanese Women Union] told the state-owned newspaper, the New Horizon, yesterday.

"The idea of the formation of the women's network in Sudan is to bring all Sudanese women, the government and the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army(SPLA) as well as other opposition groups together...

"The talks will involve both politicians and women at the grassroots level', Achan pointed out...

"She[Achan] called upon Sudan's mainly male leaders to include women in future peace talks, pointing out that the participants in the latest talks, held earlier this year in Nairobi, Kenya, included only one woman..."

-from "War-Weary Sudanese Women Seek To End Conflict," page 15, Nov. 22 THE FINAL CALL(Chicago, IL.)

Legal Conference In London: "Race For Justice '95"

"In a move to address the needs of the Black people in the justice system, attorney Johnnie Cochran was invited here[London] for a three day legal conference. Also invited was Rodney King's lawyer, Milton Grimes.

"The first part of the conference...was held at the Commonwealth Institute, Kensington, November 18. It...brought together an international array of judges, police officers and criminal justice professionals...

"The British legal system, Johnnie Cochran noted, suffers some of the same problems as the US legal system...

"The issue of multi-racial juries is an issue highlighted within the conference... In the UK, the Royal Commission on Criminal Jusice put forward a motion in 1993 spanning all areas of the criminal justice system. They made 352 recommendations for change. These included police investigations, treatments of suspects in custody, jury selection, the issue of multi-racial juries and miscarriages of justice...

"the move towards multi-racial juries is being resisted by some who claim it would be detrimental to society as a whole... (Cont. on inside back cover)

GUEST COMMENTARY

After not watching television for three years, watching it again has been and eye-opening experience. During my incarceration of six years, I have taken it upon myself to study African history, cultures, and customs, after asking myself why am I here. I had begun to look at my actions, feelings, and thinking, all that had contributed to the loss of my so-called "freedom" and my painful separation from my family. In this search, I began to study very diligently. I chose to forego the "comfort"/distraction of television and immerse myself in books.

I started watching television again a few weeks ago. The images I saw were demeaning, degrading, stereotypical, and assassinating of the character of African men, women, and children all over the world--systematically!

Watching Charles Perez, Gordon Elliott, Jenny Jones, Ricki Lake, Montel Williams, Geraldo Rivera, Mark Walberg, Oprah Winfrey, Phil Donahue, and Jerry Springer, I have seen, through a **conscious** eye, white supremacy at work in its technological form of entertainment--television. Television is a very powerful tool of white supremacy and one of the most dangerous since it has such a strong influence on people--children and adolescents, especially.

Lately, African people have become increasingly willing to participate in the culturecide and mentacide that are promoted by these talk shows. Why would Africans, in their **right minds**, participate in a forum that includes dialogue about such topics as: "Your boyfriend is sleeping with your best friend," "...sleeping with your sister," "sleeping with your mother"; homosexuality; bisexuality; or/and other tendencies and practices, habits; etc.?

The scream that resounds within my mind reverberates from the spirit of empathy, as I watch Africans continually put each other down, often in the name of love or friendship. Watching television confirms, as Frances Welsing and Neely Fuller talk of in their works, "that the system of white supremacy has the majority--non-whites--under control." Talk shows have the ability to stimulate

the lower nature of most people by instilling in them a value system reflected in the images of drugs, sex, murder, and other forms of mayhem. They influence people to neglect the higher faculties, or mind, producing individuals who touch, taste, hear, smell, and see with their persona in such a fashion that they have no realization that these five senses can function as a whole organ. They have no realization that the wholistic functioning of these senses can open up doorways of spirituality leading to the ability to live harmonious lifestyles.

Understanding European psychology, we see, first, their line of thought. Secondly, we see their system of analyses, which is based on compartmentalization--**left-mindedness.** Viewing the world in compartments is dangerous. And when you have an ideology that stresses the separation of church and state, education and religion, etc., you are stimulating the left brain, which is responsible for analytical thinking patterns. This way of thinking also forms the basis of a European culture that has been forced on people, aimed at and directed toward the masses of people through picture-images that have a more stimulating impact on the reptillian brain. The reptillian brain comprises a portion/the stem which functions as perception, emotions, desires, and governs all physiological operations of the human body. Understanding this, we can see why we act the way we act. Behavior is developed by what we hear, see, and do. The most important thing about the reptillian brain is its dominion over perception and thinking--abilities developed between the ages of 4 and 25.

Letting our children watch the kind of nonsense provided by talk shows makes them vulnerable to developing a mentality other than their natural frame of mind. This nonsense systematically annihilates the **right-hemispheric** line of thought. The right brain is responsible for cognitive thinking and puts things together to form wholes. This part of the brain is also very intuitive and gives Africans a better sense of judgement and kindness. But as long as we allow our children to grow up without our guidance, they will continue to grow up in this Western/"white" society **miseducated** and will always sit on the stages of white supremist television networks. Also, we will continue to perpetuate alienation, self-hate,

patriarchy, and moral assassination, as we answer the call of the formats and topics that fill these shows daily.

In light of the Million-Man March on Washington, we need to, as true Africans, redirect and refocus our collective mind and develop a social, economic, and political foundation. It should be a concept based on an **Afrocentric perspective** that encompasses the world. By "Afrocentric," I mean, first the study of an African-based philosophy, psychology, theology, and system of education with Africa as our centered source of reference. Secondly, we need to re-educate ourselves. This can be achieved by reading the works of Cheikh anta-Diop, Yosef Ben Jochannan, Marimba Ani, Ra Un Nefer Amen, Wade Nobles, Maulana Karenga, Joel A. Rogers, Jacob Carruthers, Kwame Nkrumah, Haki Madhubuti, Jawanza Kunjufu, Chancellor Williams, Lliola O. Afrika, Naim Akbar, Richard King, Asa Hilliard, Amos Wilson, John G. Jackson, Charles Finch, Nur Ankh Amen, Rhwty Wimby, Gerald Massey, Albert Churchward, Godfrey Higgins, Anthony T. Browder, Michael Bradley, et al.

We must understand that white supremacy works on **all** levels of people's activities: education, politics, religion, war, labor, law, economics, sex, and the fields of entertainment. So instead of watching so much television and participating in the madness it provides, we need to spend our time studying. And as we can see on television, we have a lot of cleaning of the mind to do. **This is the most important step in becoming a "New African."**

Just imagine that there was a time when all Africans basically thought on the same line. Now, even though it may be hard for us to do, we should ask ourselves why. Why is it so hard for us to envision an African people living in an almost monolithic and Utopian society. Why can't we see ourselves thinking, feeling, caring, and loving ourselves and our people in this way?

Is it because television has not allowed us to know who we really are? Or do we--African men, women, and children-really care to know?

-Iem Hotep Sa Ra Editor's Note: The title of the above is improperly listed on the cover. It should be "Character Assassination."

Kuumba (Creativity)

BROTHERS WHO ANSWERED THE CALL

The call went out
for one million African men
one MILLION African men
to come to the seat
of the power of the illegitimate in power
where monuments to pseudo-democratic rule
in so much white stone
glint garishly beneath the sun/
the call went out
and we came
one brother to a reporter said
"from as young as three
to a man a hundred and five"/
despite all the sinister attempts
to turn our hearts cold to the call
we came/
despite the not seldom heard
discouraging words
attacking those who made the call
we came/
despite the pathetic pronouncements
of Africans whose tongues had been leased
by pale masters
who loaned them words to speak
we came/
from all across the country and from without
we came
brothers who know of offices
brothers who know of streets
brothers of the cross
brothers of the crescent
brothers learned in our past
and brothers who have lived as if
there were only the present
brothers down with the generation x
and brothers tuned in to Malcolm X

(Cont. on inside back cover)

In what is popularly known as the "Osirian Myth," the Kemetic(ancient "Egyptian") deity, Auser("Osiris") is murdered by his evil and jealous brother, Set("Seth"), through an act of trickery and with the help of several accomplices. Set seals the coffin containing his brother's body and tosses it into the Nile. Eventually, the coffin washes ashore and is discovered by the deity, Auset("Isis"), the wife/sister of Auser. Set steals the corpse, cuts it into fourteen pieces, and scatters them about Kemet. Auset finds the fragments and, with the help of her and Auser's son, Heru("Horus"), and other deities; reassembles the fragments into a mummy; and, with her wings, fans the corpse of her husband, returning to it the breath of life.

The above is a very abbreviated retelling of this ancient tale. In any case, it is this Kemetic allegory about the struggle between good and evil, life and death, and resurrection that Ayi Kwei Armah employs as a "germinating seed" for the birth of his latest novel, OSIRIS RISING. In this novel, set somewhere in modern Africa, an African woman of U.S. birth, Ast, finds a friend, Asar, she had met in the states. The closeness they had established builds so that they become lovers, both on the high spiritual plane as well as on a physical level.

Asar is one of a number of Brothers and Sisters, united under the Kemetic symbol of life, the ankh. They are working to bring the spirit of life back to their people. Ast joins this group. And while it is working to change the **consciousness** of the people and **not** plotting armed insurrection against the government, which is corrupt and oppressive, the head of the government security agency, one **Seth** Spencer Soja, feels threatened by the existence of this band of Brothers and Sisters. He is at work, with the aid of many henchmen, to see to their "neutralization." But he is not only motivated by his fear of loss of power but also by jealousy. He had also met Ast in the States, while doing university studies, and had seen himself as being in competition with Asar for Ast's affections. As a corrupt and autocratic super-cop, Seth both fears and

is out to destroy Asar. But with Ast's arrival in "his" country and her reuniting with Asar, he is driven not only by cold political motivations but by the raging heat of one whose all-encompassing greed drives him to hate a "competitor" for the woman he wants for himself.

OSIRIS RISING is a love story, a tale of corruption and greed, an examination of a struggle between the forces of resurrection(good) and the forces of destruction(evil), and an illustration of the interrelatedness of real life and symbolism/mythology. As is the case with his other novels, Armah's OSIRIS RISING is a profound journey for the reader but not one filled with those verbal obscurities and self-indulgence so common among writers who try to tackle profound issues. This novel is, at the same time, easy reading and seriously thought-provoking.

Ayi Kwei Armah is a literary "herbalist," one who is steeped in the positive, life-affirming values of his ancestors and sees that we African people are in a condition of sickness. He identifies the source of that sickness: what he speaks of in his TWO THOUSAND SEASONS as the "white way of death." As a literary "herbalist," Ayi Kwei doesn't stop at identifying the source but offers us the healing properties of his insights, as delivered through his mastery of story-telling. OSIRIS RISING is only the latest example("dose") of this.

As of this writing, we don't know if OSIRIS RISING is available yet in the U.S. For information as to ordering, you may write to Per Ankh; B.P. 2, Popenguine; Senegal, West Africa. Per Ankh is a recently established publishing house run collectively by Armah and a group of other African writers. This group of Brothers and Sisters have taken the concept of self-determination and applied it concretely to the publishing, marketing, etc. of literary works by Africans.

-Editor

Announcements

The prison chapter of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization will be holding its annual Kwanzaa program for members and outside guests on Dec. 30th., 1995. Historian and lecturer, Ashra Kwesi, who was to have been the guest speaker at our symposium this past October, will be appearing here on Jan. 6, 1996 for our Saturday afternoon meeting. If you are interested in attending either or both programs, you may contact us by phone at 471-3161, ext. 3800. Call between 1 and 2:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. We need to know of your commitment to attend approximately 10 days prior to the event.

Black Seeds, Inc. announces publication of its 1966 "Black Historical and Educational Calendar," the theme of which is "we who believe in freedom...rising still." For information on ordering the calendar and/or other products, contact Black Seeds, Inc.; 1217 17th St., N.E.; Washington, D.C.; 20002.

AFRICAN WORLD is a new magazine which describes itself as "the forum of people of African descent." "AFRICAN WORLD probes the depth of issues to reveal their consequences and implications for people of African descent. The magazine sharpens awareness of the common ancestry of people of African descent and strives to restore Africa to the center of the world...Our columnists include: Olusegun Obasanjo, Mike Thelwell, Ama Ata Aidoo, Bill Strickland, Toni Morrison," et al. For subscription information, write to: Subscription Dept.; AFRICAN WORLD; P.O. Box 60645; Florence, MA; 01060-0645.

Back In Time

Antonio Maceo was born in the province of Santiago de Cuba in 1848, of a mulatto father, Marco Maceo, and a black ex-slave mother, Marianna Grajale. Very poor, he began as a driver of oxen on a sugar plantation and was not able to read or write until he was twenty years old. Whend the first Cuban insurrection broke out in 1868, he was the first to join...

In Cuba he found that the revolt started by Jose Martin and General Gomez was languishing...With his followers on hardy Cuban ponies and with no impediments but their rifles, machetes, and cartridges, he began a vigorous onslaught...Spain, in alarm, sent out her ablest commander, Field Marshal Campos, with 10,000 additional men...

Undaunted, Maceo's raiders swept over Puerto Principe, across the "trochas," past the rich and fertile provinces of Santa Clara and Matanzas, dodging past the Spanish columns, dashing at out-posts, burning plantations,...blowing up railways, cutting telegraph lines,...

At last he met the brave old Marshal Campos, and Maceo out-maneuvered him so completely that the Spanish king-maker had only just time to return by sea to Havana before Maceo himself appeared close to the capital of the island, carrying fire and sword into the wealthiest and the most loyal territory of Cuba...One after the other he defeated Spain's best generals--Cledes, Lugue, Cornell, Echague, Deods. Campos was recalled and Weyler, known as "Butcher Weyler," was sent in his place.

Weyler, finding that force was unsuccessful, tried to stir up color dissension. A majority of the Cuban insurgents were Negroes...Weyler tried to get the blacks to desert him[Maceo], offering them full equality with whites and high government posts. They rejected his offer with scorn...

Source: WORLD'S GREAT MEN OF COLOR by J.A. Rogers

Note: "trochas"--wide fortifications of barbed wire, cement, and bombs constructed by Weyler

BROTHERS...

brothers from every walk of life
in step to the march
of a million men
gathered in peace to draw
from the strength of numbers
and common cause
a spirit of rebirth and determination
with which we leave
to return revived
to the open arms of our people
whom we shall not fail.

-Mondo

"Sir Ivan Lawrence QC, chairman of the Home Affairs Select Committee and a practicing white criminal lawyer explained: 'The feeling in this country is that we should resist anything that begins to look divisive about our legal system...If we're going to start changing our system to give precedence, or prominence or priority to a particular race, I think we go down a slippery path that I don't think people in this ccountry want to see'...Some even claim that multi-racial juries show contempt for the decision-making process of 'ordinary' people; that to imply a jury should be representative of the society's racial make-up suggests 'ordinary', i.e. white people, are incapable of reaching a fair conclusion."...

-from "Race For Justice '95," pages 13 and 26, Dec. 20
THE FIANL CALL